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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [OSCE](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [GG](#) [RS](#) [GM](#) [EU](#)
SUBJECT: GERMANY/GEORGIA: STATUS OF EU OBSERVER MISSION AND
OTHER INITIATIVES

REF: A. TBILISI 01522
[B](#). STATE 97574
[C](#). BERLIN 01221

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Jeffrey Rathke
for reasons: 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The German government is using numerous bilateral and multilateral tools to assist Georgia in its recovery from the recent war with Russia. Germany strongly supports the EU observer mission in Georgia and seems determined to meet the October 1 deployment deadline. Chancellor Merkel has already committed to provide one-fifth of the 200-person mission. The 40 German monitors are likely to be a mixture of police officers and civilians drawn from a list of pre-trained and pre-selected personnel who are ready to deploy at short notice. While the original intent was for German monitors to be unarmed, that is being reconsidered in view of the fact that France's contribution will include armed gendarmarie. Merkel wants to submit the mission to the Bundestag for approval, but MFA and Chancellery officials assure us that this can be done quickly and should not delay the deployment. Germany is also supporting the planned donor conference in late October, which they expect to take place in an EU capital rather than Tbilisi. Meanwhile, neither the Chancellery nor the MFA appear to be doing much at the moment to carry out FM Steinmeier's proposals for an independent commission to investigate the causes of the Georgian conflict or a regional conference to help stabilize the Caucasus.
END SUMMARY

EU OBSERVER MISSION

[1](#)2. (C) Germany strongly supports the EU observer mission in Georgia and seems determined to meet the October 1 deployment deadline. Chancellor Merkel publicly pledged September 10 that Germany would contribute a fifth of the 200 observers. This has been subsequently confirmed publicly by FM Steinmeier. According to the MFA, the EU Political and Security Committee (PSC) will meet today (September 12) to coordinate pledges, but preliminary indications are that the target of 200 has already been exceeded, with France leading the way with 60.

[1](#)3. (C) The 40 German monitors are likely to be a mixture of police officers and civilians drawn from a list maintained by the German Government Center for International Peace Operations (Zentrum fuer Internationale Friedensinsaetzen -- ZIF). Established in 2002 to enhance Germany's civilian crisis prevention capabilities, ZIF trains, recruits and maintains a pool of German civilian professionals able to deploy on overseas missions at short notice. While the original intent was for German monitors to be unarmed, that is being reconsidered in view of the fact that France's contribution will include armed gendarmarie. In any event, Merkel has already committed to having the Bundestag approve the mission, but MFA and Chancellery officials assure us that

this can be done quickly and should not delay the deployment.

The Bundestag begins its fall session September 15 and also will be in session the week of September 22.

ACCESS TO SOUTH OSSETIA AND ABKHAZIA

¶4. (C) Regarding the mandate of the EU observer mission, Merkel has said publicly that the EU will have to negotiate with Russia about gaining access to South Ossetia and Abkhazia. While MFA and Chancellery officials agree with us that the EU needs to push this point with Moscow, they are not hopeful about Russian acquiescence. MFA Deputy Head of the OSCE Division Karin Goebel confirmed that the OSCE faces similar difficulties, and that Germany only expects the eight original OSCE observers to be allowed to enter South Ossetia.

Goebel said that the original OSCE mandate for South Ossetia concerning promoting the respect of human rights could allow an investigation into claims of atrocities committed against ethnic Georgians (ref A). In what she described as a hopeful sign of Russian flexibility, Goebel said that the new OSCE observers already in Georgia had been allowed into Akhalkgori in South Ossetia

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION

¶5. (C) FM Steinmeier publicly proposed last week that an independent commission, possibly under the OSCE, investigate the causes of the war, but officials in the Chancellery and the MFA appear to be doing little to actualize the idea. Chancellery Deputy Division Director Christoph Israng and Goebel agreed that the question is important, but Israng said that Steinmeier merely made the suggestion to appease the significant segment of the German public that believes Germany is "too Georgia-friendly" and/or has ethnic ties to Russia. Goebel argued that such an investigation would hurt rather than assist cooperation efforts in the region. She confirmed that while "contemplating" the idea, the MFA's OSCE Division was not engaged in any concrete efforts to carry it out and viewed such an investigation as ill-suited for the OSCE. Such an investigation, in Goebel's view, also would be hindered by the OSCE's inability to have unfettered access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. She suggested that the Council of Europe would be a better forum for a discussion of the root causes.

OCTOBER 15 GENEVA MEETING

¶6. (C) According to MFA Deputy Caucasus Office Director Maria Gosse, Germany expects the October 15 meeting in Geneva to focus on whether the six-point plan is being adhered to, rather than a discussion how to facilitate an investigation of the causes of the conflict. In response to ref B points, Gosse argued that Abkhazia and South Ossetia needed to be represented at the October 15 meeting to discuss the implementation of the six-point plan. Although Gosse agreed that national delegations from the two break-away regions should not be seated, she stressed that the GOG viewed it as "unwise to shut out" their representatives. She further related that the French are preparing a paper due by the end of September to suggest how the October 15 meeting should unfold. Gosse agreed with ref B that the basing of 7,600 Russian troops in the two provinces is not consistent with Russia's obligations in the six-point plan to withdraw its forces to pre-August 7 positions, but she argued that the EU needs to take a "realistic" position to move negotiations forward.

¶7. (C) Gosse's take on how to approach the October 15 meeting appears to mesh with the Chancellery's view. Merkel publicly stressed that the resumption of Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) negotiations with Russia hinges on fulfillment of point five (Russian withdrawal out of Georgia proper) and not the fulfillment of all six points. Israng also expected the October 15 meeting to consider how to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs).

SENDING AID AND ASSISTING RECONSTRUCTION

18. (C) According to Gosse, Germany's plans for the proposed donor conference remain in flux, and the French EU presidency is responsible for determining when and where the conference will take place. Israng said that the donor conference should not take place in Tbilisi because Georgian President Saakashvili would try to make a "show" out of it. Gosse confirmed that Tbilisi was a highly unlikely venue and mentioned Prague as a top possibility among the EU capitals, but reiterated that Germany was not taking the lead on planning the conference. Germany already has allotted two million euros in humanitarian aid (ref C), and MFA Deputy Division Head for Reconstruction Uebber informed POLOFF that an expert is currently in Georgia to determine the details (such as location, materials, etc.) for the eight million Euro package for prefabricated housing for IDPs. Asked about other ways Germany is assisting Georgia, Uebber mentioned several small projects, such as giving building materials to residents of Gori and potentially purchasing a backup computer server to assist the Georgian Civil Registration Agency. Uebber argued that while funds remain to support reconstruction in Georgia, she was unsure how badly Georgia needed the assistance and identified a lack of concrete projects to fund.

REGIONAL STABILITY CONFERENCE

19. (C) FM Steinmeier, in his opening speech at the annual German Ambassadors' Conference September 8 in Berlin, supported the Turkish proposal to hold a conference following the Balkan model with the goal of "a strategic framework which stabilizes and transforms the region of the Caucasus, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea on the basis of the European Neighborhood Policy." Israng shared that the Chancellery was not clear on how Steinmeier envisioned this and wondered if it could be folded into one of the other numerous proposals. Gosse expected the EU to take up this effort rather than the German MFA.

10. (C) COMMENT: Thus far, there is little behind FM Steinmeier's proposals for an investigation into the causes of the conflict and a regional stability conference. While agreeing that an investigation sounds nice in theory, our working-level contacts acknowledge that it could be more harmful than helpful, especially now. The MFA seems to be doing little concrete to move Steinmeier's proposal forward. Our contacts also regard Steinmeier's proposal for a stability conference as vague, and the responsible MFA division has punted the issue to the EU. Steinmeier has touted Germany as the EU's largest bilateral donor to Georgia, but the MFA Division for Reconstruction is questioning how severe Georgia's needs are and focusing its attention on smaller projects rather than the larger-scale projects, such as prefabricated housing.

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